



2021 N.C. State Fair Health & Safety Guidance

We can hardly believe when the N.C. State Fair opens on October 14, 2021, it will have been 718 days since we closed our gates on October 27, 2019. COVID-19 has changed us all. None of us are the people we were before, and no event will be the same as pre-pandemic times. Many events and businesses have reimaged their entire model from the ground up. That's what we've been doing.

This year's fair will look different from any other time you've visited. Some of your favorite vendors may have decided the best decision for them is to sit this year out. Some of your favorite exhibits may have scaled back. We completely respect each small business owner's decision to do what they feel is best for themselves and their employees.

We've done the work to place 40 new vendors we're excited for you to try. We've moved the Got to Be NC Agriculture Pavilion and the North Carolina Public House Craft Beer, Wine, Cider & Soda into Dorton Arena, giving two of our biggest exhibits room to spread out and invite more local growers and producers to participate. There is no staff more committed to making this year's 2021 N.C. State Fair 'Worth the Wait!' than our entire team here at the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Detailed below is the health and safety guidance for this year's fair. We know to have a safe and successful event, we need every fairgoer to do their part to protect both themselves and others in attendance. We acknowledge that there is no perfect solution, and that nothing any of us does will provide a completely risk-free experience. We're counting on the spirit of community we all love about the fair. We ask that you do your part to help us provide as safe an experience as possible by following our health and safety guidance.

First, get vaccinated. If you've already taken this step, thank you! Vaccination is the most effective way for us to get to the other side of this pandemic. While we will not require proof of vaccination or a recent negative COVID-19 test for admission to the fair, we strongly encourage everyone to go out and get vaccinated. If you're not vaccinated and plan to attend, we urge you to find the time to get vaccinated – both for your safety, and the safety of others. It is widely recognized that the best way to lessen the most severe symptoms of the virus, up to and including death, is to get vaccinated. If you can't go beforehand, First United Methodist Church of Cary is partnering with Wake County Public Health, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) and FEMA to offer free vaccines in its restaurant space near the end of restaurant row near Dorton Arena. Please consider stopping by during your visit. For more information, [go to MySpot.NC.gov](https://www.myspot.nc.gov)

Next, determine if this year is the right time for your family to visit. We respect every person's right to make the best decision they can for themselves and their family. That starts with being informed. NCDHHS advises those who are not yet fully vaccinated for COVID-19 and those who are immunocompromised to carefully consider their exposure. This also includes a recommendation that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, should wear a face covering in indoor public spaces and in crowded outdoor settings in areas with high or substantial transmission. It may also mean that coming to

this year's N.C. State Fair isn't the best decision for you. The [NCDHHS COVID-19 dashboard](#) has the latest information on testing, vaccinations, what to do if you feel ill, protecting yourself and others and the latest data trends in North Carolina. We want each and every one of you to make the best decision for your personal health and safety that you can, and NCDHHS is the best source for the most up-to-date information.

Protect yourself and others by wearing a face covering. The N.C. State Fair is spread over 345-acres but there are spaces that are inherently busy, regardless of the total number of people in attendance. The number one thing people tell us they come to the fair for is food. This makes it extremely difficult on our staff and public safety officers to enforce a mask mandate. We are urging you to do your part and wear your face covering except when you are eating and drinking and when you cannot remain socially distanced, especially inside buildings and tents. Disposable face masks will be available at our ticket gates and guest services silos if you forget to bring yours. Please note that if you arrive via NC By Train or GoRaleigh Route 27, face masks are federally required on all public transportation.

Choose the day/time you plan to attend to mitigate risk. If you want to beat the crowds, consider attending on one of our weekdays, or before lunch each day. These are the times you'll be in contact with smaller gatherings of people. Insider tip: The first Friday, October 15, is traditionally our day with the smallest attendance.

Social distance. With so much to see and do, there is always something new to discover. While one portion of the fairgrounds may be busy, head out to explore somewhere you've never visited. We've spread out our vendors and some of our carnival rides this year and added more space around picnic tables and benches to better aid social distancing. The possibilities at the fair are endless, and you may just find your new favorite area of the fair.

Wash your hands. It's really that simple. Frequent hand washing is one of the main ways you can mitigate risk. There are restrooms and outdoor hand washing stations throughout the fairgrounds. There will also be readily available hand sanitizer at guest services and at many of the food booths, rides and exhibits you visit.

Don't feel well? Stay home. If you or someone you have direct contact with is not feeling well, please get tested before you visit the fair. Please stay home if:

- You have a fever, cough or other symptoms, you might have COVID-19. Please stay home and do not visit public places.
- You have tested positive within 10 days of your planned visit to the fair regardless of vaccination status.
- You are unvaccinated and have been in the immediate vicinity of someone who has tested positive (even if you don't have symptoms) within 14 days of your visit.
- If you are vaccinated and you've had close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should get tested 3-5 days after your exposure, even if you don't have symptoms. You should also wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative.

Get tested after you visit. NCDHHS recommends that people who are not vaccinated should get tested for COVID-19 three to five days after attending any large event attended by those who do not live in your home. To find a testing site visit [NCDHHS Find My Testing Place](#)

Most of all, practice kindness. Seriously, we are all in this together. A little kindness and patience will go a long way to making this event the best on record. The world is short-staffed, even the fair. Please be kind to those who have shown up and put in the hours to make the 2021 N.C. State Fair 'Worth the Wait!'

Public Safety

The N.C. State Fair includes walk-through or wand metal detectors at all entry gates. All belongings are subject to search at each of the fair's entrances. In an effort to improve fairgoer safety and efficiency of entry into the N.C. State Fair, a clear bag policy will be implemented in 2021. Limiting the style of bags permitted aids in maintaining a safe and secure environment, while getting you into the fair quicker.

Prohibited Items

- Weapons or objects that appear to be weapons, including all pocketknives and pepper sprays
- Alcoholic beverages and any illegal substance
- Drones
- Bikes, skateboards, skates, hoverboards, manual stand-up scooters
- Leashed service dogs are allowed. All pets are prohibited.
- Other items may be refused at the discretion of law enforcement

The following items will be permitted into the N.C. State Fair, and will be checked at security points at each ticketed gate:

Any clear plastic, vinyl or PVC bag. There is no size restriction as long as the bag is clear.

Small purses or clutch bags no larger than 6.5" x 4.5" (approximately the size of a hand) with or without a handle or strap can be taken into the fairgrounds in addition to one of the clear plastic bags.

Exceptions are granted for medically necessary items or diaper bags after proper inspection.

Hard pass holders and competitors are exempt.

Clear Bag Policy FAQs

Why is the N.C. State Fair adopting a Clear Bag Policy?

Fairgoer safety has always been our number one priority. Each year, in an effort to improve public safety, all policies and procedures are evaluated. This measure will enhance safety both inside and outside of the N.C. State Fair.

Are other event facilities adopting similar policies?

Yes. Several ACC and NCAA institutions, large event facilities and all NFL stadiums have adopted similar policies to increase public safety.

How does the new bag policy improve public safety?

A clear bag is easily and quickly searched, greatly reduces faulty bag searches and allows for a more efficient and effective process in checking bags that are brought into the N.C. State Fair.

Can I carry cameras, smart phones, or tablets separately from what I put in a clear bag?

Yes. Phones, cameras and tablets can be carried into the N.C. State Fair as long as it is not in its own bag. This is not a restriction on items that have been allowed into the N.C. State Fair in the past. It is only a restriction on the type of container used to carry those items.

What happens if I show up at the gate with a bag that is not permitted?

In 2021, clear bags will be available at the gates for fairgoers to empty their belongings into before they enter the security checkpoint. Fairgoers also have the option to return their bags to their vehicle before entering.

Are there any exceptions for medically necessary items or diaper bags?

Medically necessary items and diaper bags will be allowed after proper inspection.

Do I have to put everything I'm carrying into the permissible bags?

No. Fairgoers are limited only to the type of bags carried into the N.C. State Fair, not items they may normally bring that fit in pockets or clutch bags (e.g., keys, makeup, feminine products, comb, phone, wallet, credit cards).

Does this bag policy apply to credentialed individuals (e.g., media, staff)?

There will be an exception specifically for "credentialed" individuals who bring bags that do not meet the policy guidelines. However, their bags will still be searched prior to entry and only bags that pass the inspection will be allowed into the N.C. State Fair.

PLEASE NOTE: The N.C. State Fair reserves the right to prohibit any item deemed dangerous or unsuitable by public safety officers at security checkpoints. Prohibited items that are discovered during security inspections at the stadium entrances must be either returned to the owner's vehicle or discarded. Unlawful items that are discovered during security inspections are subject to confiscation, and the person in possession of those items may be denied entrance into the N.C. State Fair and is subject to arrest.

NC STATE FAIR BAG POLICY

APPROVED BAGS

One Approved Bag Per Person

 CLEAR BACKPACK	 CLEAR FANNY PACK	 CLEAR TOTE <small>Plastic, vinyl, or PVC</small>
 GALLON BAG <small>1 Gallon re-sealable, clear, plastic storage bag</small>	 SMALL PURSES or CLUTCH BAGS <small>Do not exceed 6.5" x 4.5"</small>	 DIAPER BAG <small>Must be accompanied by child</small>

PROHIBITED BAGS

 BACKPACK	 TINTED PLASTIC BAG	 CAMERA CASE	 CINCH BAG	 COMPUTER BAG	 FANNY PACK
 MESH BAG	 OVERSIZED TOTE BAG	 PRINTED PATTERN PLASTIC BAG	 LARGE PURSES		

Medically necessary items and diaper bags will be allowed after proper inspection.

There is an exception specifically for "credentialed" staff, vendors, competitors and media who bring bags that do not meet the policy guidelines. However, their bags will still be searched prior to entry and only bags that pass the inspection will be allowed into the N.C. State Fair.

For additional information and frequently asked questions, please visit ncstatefair.org